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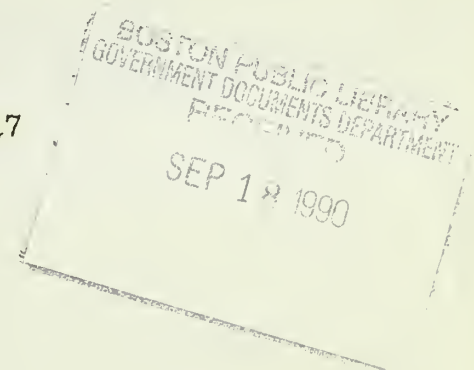
Boston Municipal Research Bureau

25 PEMBERTON SQUARE BOSTON 8, MASS.

TELEPHONE: LAFAYETTE 5976

C O P Y

May 15, 1947



To the Members of the House Committee
on Municipal Finance,

Gentlemen:

House No. 2081 provides that there shall be paid to the members of the Boston Finance Commission, other than the chairman, the sum of \$20 for every day spent in the performance of their duties, payments to any one member not to exceed \$2000 in a single year. In the judgment of the Municipal Research Bureau, this is undesirable legislation and should be given an adverse report by your committee.

At present Section 17 of the Boston city charter states that the chairman of the Finance Commission is to receive annual compensation of \$5000 and that the other members are unpaid. This provision has not been changed since adoption of the 1909 charter. On numerous occasions there have been suggestions for altering the membership and compensation of the members of the Commission, but none gained legislative acceptance. The special charter inquiries of 1923 and 1933 considered the organization and membership of the commission and recommended that no change be made.

During its nearly forty years of valuable work for the City of Boston, no small part of the strength of the commission has been the able and disinterested service of the associate members who accepted appointment with no thought of personal gain. Membership on the commission is regarded both as an honor and as an opportunity to render a public service. If a sacrifice is involved, it is a sacrifice in the public interest. The position is similar to that of the trustee of an institution. The commission was originally set up on just this basis and thus far every effort to alter its character has been successfully resisted.

It might as well be recognized that there would be a temptation to use the associate membership as a political reward if compensation were attached to the position. The Finance Commission might become a place to tuck away administration favorites; and the membership of the commission, which has such large powers and responsibility, would tend to deteriorate.

Sincerely yours,

Richard A. Atkins
Secretary

RAA:mhd

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